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ABSTRACT

An instructional study was conducted (1) to explore the efficacy of using an explicit instruction model versus a basal approach to teach the comprehension or critical reading skills of discerning fact and opinion and evaluating evidence, and (2) to learn whether adding a functional aspect to the instruction would affect the students' acquisition of the skills. Two experimental treatment groups and a control group were formed using 37 fourth grade students. Subjects were assigned to one of three treatment groups: explicit instruction, functional explicit instruction, and no instruction. The hypotheses formulated were that students in the two instruction groups would perform at a significantly higher level on the posttest than the no instruction group, and that the functional explicit instruction group would perform better on those sections of the posttest dealing with extended text. The results indicated that explicit instruction is beneficial for poorer readers but not for better readers. No differences in performance among the three groups were found on those sections of the posttest dealing with extended text. Extensive appendixes include models of explicit instruction, research data, explicit instruction materials, functional explicit instruction materials, and the posttest. (EL)

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Teaching a Reading Comprehension Skill: Fact and Opinion

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In the past few years there has been a proliferation of research studies exploring the efficacy of "direct" and "explicit" models of comprehension instruction, the results of which have been fairly encouraging (for reviews see Tierney and Cunningham, 1980. 1984; Pearson and Gallagher, 1983). The purpose of the present study is to apply an explicit comprehension model to teaching a common critical reading skill--discerning fact and opinion. A secondary purpose is to address the issue of functionality in comprehension instruction. Although many of the recent studies address the What, How, and Why of skills, they often do not address the usefulness or function of the skills in "real world" reading situations.

The proliferation of comprehension studies can be linked to several developments. First, cognitive psychologists studying the comprehension process have provided us with hypotheses about how expert readers comprehend text and about how we might develop those processes in students (Pearson, 1984, 1985). It has also been found that there is a dearth of comprehension instruction in classrooms (Durkin 1978-79; Duffy & McIntyre, 1980; Blanton, in press) and in teachers' manuals of basal reading programs (Durkin, 1981;

Beck, McKeown, McCaslin & Burkes, 1979).

Durkin (1978-79) observed 17,997 minutes of reading instruction in grades three to six and found only 45 minutes devoted to comprehension instruction. The average length of an instance of instruction was only 3.7 minutes. (The amount of time spent on assessment of comprehension was ten times that spent on instruction.) In a subsequent study, Durkin (1981) found that much of the comprehension instruction in basal manuals amounts to little more than mentioning--giving enough information so that students know what skill they are using and how to complete the task--and practice. An observational study by Duffy and McIntyre (1980) revealed that during reading period teachers basically monitored students through commercial materials and limited instruction to correction and feedback. It was also discovered, through interviews, that this is what teachers thought they were supposed to do.

At least a partial explanantion for the lack of comprehension instruction in schools and in basals is that until the last several years we did not know what comprehension instruction should look like. More recently, some initiatives have come from the traditions of "direct" and "explicit" instruction.

Comprehension Instruction Models

The principles of "direct" instruction originate with the teacher effectiveness studies (e.g. Berliner, 1981;

Berliner and Rosenshine, 1977; Brophy, 1979; Brophy and Good, in press; Duffy, 1981, 1982; Good and Brophy, 1984; Rosenshine, 1983, Rosenshine and Berliner,1978; Rosenshine and Stevens, 1984.) Two major principles of direct instruction include the notions of engaged time and teacher monitoring. Engaged time is that proportion of the instruction period in which the student is "on task", the assumption being that the more time a student is engaged in an academic task, the more he or she will learn. Teacher monitoring research indicates that the most effective teachers are those who are most structured, most in control and the most directive. These teachers ensure that students will remain on task or "academically engaged."

In reviewing the major teacher effectiveness studies assessing reading achievement, Rosenshine and Stevens (1984) conclude: "Students who receive their instruction from a teacher consistently perform better that those who are expected to learn on their own or from other students". The characteristics of effective teaching that fall out of these studies include a predictable sequence of demonstration, guided practice, feedback and correction, and independent practice. Inherent in this model is a gradual release of responsibility from the teacher to the students, a notion which can be traced as far back as Herbart in the 19th century (Meyer, 1975).

More recently, this model has been adapted by Campione (1981) and used, in various forms, in research by Palinscar and Brown (1983), Gordon and Pearson (1983); Raphael and

Pearson, (1982); Raphael, Wonnacut and Pearson (1983); Paris, Lipson, Cross, Jacobs, Bebritto and Oka, (1982); Hare and Borchardt (1984); Baumann (1984) and others. A graphic representation of this model appears in Figure 1.

Insert figure 1 about here

The assumption behind the direct instruction model and its various adaptations is that the all of the responsibility for teaching initially rests with the teacher. The teacher begins by demonstrating or modelling his or her use of the skill or strategy, making explicit otherwise implicit processes. Responsibility is then gradually released to the students through guided practice. Here the students are given an opportunity to use the skill or strategy and are given feedback on their strategies as well as their answers. Finally, through independent practice and application responsibility rests entirely with the students.

Although the research in this area has been encouraging, some educators worry about what these models sometimes fail to take into account--the more "functional" aspects of reading instruction such as relevance, purpose, and applicability of particular reading skills in real reading situations.

Functional Aspects of Reading Instruction

At one extreme, educators argue that all that is

required to teach a reading skill is to put children in a supportive situation where they can develop real and personal reasons for reading a selection (e.g. Harste, Burke and Woodward, 1982; Goodman and Goodman, 1979). This view originates with the child-centered functional view of Dewey (1902) and the view that literacy is an extension of natural language learning (Goodman and Goodman, 1982). Other principles of a tradition that has come to be called the "whole language" approach are that instruction should not be comprised of fragmented exercises, and that instructional materials should be whole texts that are meaningful and relevant to students.

Although it is difficult to set up a truly functional environment in classrooms and especially in an experimental situation, we can set instruction in a purposeful "real world" context. A model for doing this comes from the work of Davis and McKnight (1984), two math educators. Figure 2 illustrates their model with a reading analogue below.

Insert Figure 2 about here

According to this model, students begin with a real purpose or situation where particular skills or strategies are required. Then those skills are isolated and learned. Finally the skills are applied in the original situation. This view is supported by several reading educators. For instance, Tierney (1982) argues that what is at the heart of

presenting a reading skill or strategy is: to what extent the skill or strategy is worth teaching; that students should be informed of "why, what, when, where and how" a skill or strategy can be used; and that students will be able to transfer or apply their expertise to new situations.

Durkin (1984) in a discussion of her study in which she examined comprehension instruction in basal reading series observed:

> One more noteworthy pattern in all the examined series is a tendency to equate definitions with comprehension instruction, and by so doing, to stop just short of being helpful for reading....What is done with fact and opinion reinforces the same conclusion. All the examined manuals encourage teachers to spend considerable time on defining fact and opinion, and on having students do exercises in which they make a distinction between sentences that state facts and sentences that express opinions. Neglected on the other hand, is the way knowing the difference between a fact and an opinion should enter into the reading process--for instance the reading of an editorial or and ad in a children's magazine (p.35).

With these issues in mind, we conducted an instructional study in order to explore two questions. First we wanted to test the efficacy of using an explicit instruction model versus a "basal" approach to teach the comprehension or critical reading skills of discerning fact and opinion and evaluating evidence. Although many studies suggest that young children can improve their critical reading skills (e.g. Taba, Levine and Elzey cited in Taba, 1965; Wolfe, King and Huck, 1968) in only one other study have researchers attempted to teach critical reading skills using a direct instruction approach versus a basal approach

(Patching, Kameenui, Carnine, Gersten, and Colvin, 1983). In that study, results on the main critical reading post test favored the direct instruction group. Two procedures differentiate that study from the present one. First, each child was taught individually rather than in small groups which is more common in classrooms. Second, the direct instruction group did not receive independent practice following instruction. In the present study, all groups received independent practice.

In reviewing the instruction in fact and opinion in several basals, we found that often instruction did not begin until fifth or sixth grade, and that it consisted entirely of identifying a single statement as a fact or an opinion. Results of our informal pilot, however, suggested that fourth grade students could perform this task quite readily. Therefore, we added several dimensions to the skill. First of all, we gave the students heuristics for figuring out why a statement was factual or an opinion (i.e. verifiability) and discussed the issue of "false" statements of fact. That is, some statements of fact can be erroneous but are still factual statements rather that statements of opinion. We then introduced the notion of using factual statements to support statement of opinion--the use of evidence (Pearson, 1983). As Patching et al (1983) point out, most of the literature on critical reading skills provides only very general strategies or guidelines for instruction. In the present study we have attempted to

formulate clear yet flexible heuristics and a particular instructional sequence for teaching this critical reading skill.

A second research question to be addressed by this study was whether adding a "functional" aspect to the instruction would affect the students' acquistion of the skills. We felt that these skills lent themselves to "functional" instruction since they are useful for evaluating advertisements, editorials and other kinds of naturally occurring texts.

To answer these questions, we formed two experimental treatment groups and a control treatment group. One experimental group (the explicit instruction group) received a series of lessons based on the explicit instruction model outlined by Pearson and Leys (1984). The instruction included teacher modelling, guided practice, review, independent practice and application. (See Table 1)

Insert Table 1 about here

The independent practice involved isolated sentences and the application involved connected texts.

The second experimental group (the "functional" explicit instruction group) received the same instruction but were given a purpose for learning the skill, and all independent practice involved whole texts. For an application task, the students were

asked to "write" an editorial for the school newspaper.

The no instruction group received definitions and practice on isolated sentences--the type of "instruction" commonly found in basals. In addition, they were asked to complete the same application task as the explicit instruction group. All students were given the same post test on the skills taught.

Two specific research hypotheses were formulated. The first hypothesis was that students in the two instruction groups would perform at a significantly higher level on the post test than the no instruction group. The second hypothesis was that the "functional" explicit instruction group would perform better on those sections of the post test dealing with extended text. No specific hypothesis was made concerning the difference between the two instructional groups on the overall post test.

Method

Subjects and Design

Thirty-seven fourth grade students from an elementary laboratory school in a midwestern university town participated in the study. Using a stratified random sample based on teacher judgement of reading ability, subjects were assigned to one of the three treatment groups: 1) explicit instruction; 2) "functional" explicit instruction; or 3) no instruction.

Hierarchical regression analyses, using students' standardized reading test scores and an experimenter-devised

pretest as covariates, were performed to assess group differences on the dependent measures--the total and subtest scores on an experimenter-devised post test.

Materials and Procedure

Three weeks prior to the experiment, all subjects took a pretest assessing 1) their ability to discriminate facts from opinions in both isolated sentences and whole texts, and 2) their understanding of the notion of using facts as evidence to support opinions. The pretest also included open-ended questions such as: "What is a fact?" and "What does it mean to say a statement can be used as evidence?" (See Appendix A) The information gathered from these open-ended probes was used to develop lessons.

All six groups (three from each class) met with an experimenter-teacher for three 40 minute periods across three days. The lessons were scripted in advance and presented by one teacher. For an outline of the instructional sequence see Table 2.

Insert Table 2 About Here

The explicit instruction group On Days 1 and 2, the explicit instruction group received 25 minutes of instruction which included Steps 1-3 of the model (modelling, guided practice and review). On day 1, the teacher defined, explained and modelled logical discriminations between facts and opinions and between

"true" facts and "false" facts. Figure 3 presents an excerpt of the teaching script during the modelling/guided practice segment of the lesson.

Insert Figure 3 About Here

A number of examples were provided and students were given an opportunity to make discriminations and justify their responses (guided practice). The teacher then reviewed what had been taught by giving specific guidelines (e.g. "Statements of fact can be readily verified or proved whereas opinions are difficult or impossible to verify".) Finally, students were given the remaining 15 minutes to practice independently on isolated sentences. (See practice sheets, Appendix B).

On day 2, the students were given feedback on their Day 1 practice sheets before Lesson 2 (on evidence) was taught using steps 1-3. Students were taught that statements of fact can be used to support statements of opinion but that statements of opinion serve as less valid evidence to support other statements of opinion. An opportunity for independent practice was again provided. Students were given a statement of opinion and asked to choose, from a list of three, one or two statements of fact that could serve as evidence. On Day 3, students were given feedback on the second lesson and then they were given texts to work with (Step 5- Application). The application materials

consisted of 2 paragraphs, one modelled after a car advertisement and one after a feature sports article. Students were asked to identify which statements of fact served as evidence for the statements of opinion.

The "functional" explicit instruction group On Day 1, the "functional" explicit instruction group was given an explanation of what they were going to learn, why it was a useful skill, and where it could be applied. They were then told that the purpose for learning it was so we could put together an editorial on the four then current presidential candidates for the school newspaper. They were told that an editorial contains both facts and opinions but they were used in a particular way that we were going to talk about. Students were then given the same instruction as the explicit instruction group up through step 3. For the independent practice they were given three paragraphs, rather than isolated sentences, and asked to identify statements of fact and statements of opinion (see practice materials, Appendix C). On Day 2, this group was again given the same insruction as the explicit instruction group through Step 3. For independent practice, they were again given paragraphs and asked to identify which statements of fact served as evidence for the statements of opinion. On Day 3, this group was given a topic sentence for four paragraphs, each conveying and opinion about one of the presidential candidates. From a "fact" sheet, they were asked to select the statements that could serve as evidence

to back up each of the topic sentences (see Appendix C).

The no instruction group This group received the same materials as the explicit instruction group, with directions written at the top of the page (see Appendix D). Any procedural questions were answered. When they finished they were given puzzles to fill in the time. This group was also given corrective feedback on their answers.

The post test

On the fourth day, all students received the post test which had four parts. (See Appendix E). Part 1 consisted of statements of fact and opinion which had to be identified. Part 2 consisted of a series of statements of opinion followed by three statements. Subjects were to choose the statement or statements that best supported the statement of opinion. In part 3, students were asked to read paragraphs and identify statements of fact and statements of opinion. In part 4, students were given a four-paragraph text with the topic sentence (an opinion) underlined. Students were asked to identify which statement or statements in the paragraph best supported the topic sentence. Each student received an overall score and a subtest score for parts 3 and 4--those parts dealing with whole texts. Two experimenters scored all of the post tests with an interrater reliability of 98%. Internal consistency reliability for the items on the post test, determined by the Kuder-Richardson Formula, was 88%.

Data Analyses

Since treatment was fully crossed with class, the two classes were pooled for the regression analyses. Using the hierarchical regression technique, two analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) were performed on these data. For the first analysis, the overall pretest score was used as the dependent measure. For the second analysis the whole-text subtest was used as the dependent measure. For both, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills Reading Subtest scores (national stanines) were entered in Step 1 and the scores on the fact and opinion pretest were entered in Step 2. In Step 3, two treatment contrasts were entered: Contrast 1 compared the no insruction group to the average of the two instructional groups; contrast 2 compared the two instructional groups with each other. In Step 4 interactions between Contrasts 1 and 2 and reading scores were entered, and in Step 5 interactions between contrasts 1 and 2 and the fact and opinon pretest scores were entered. Where interactions were found to be significant, separate regression analyses were carried out for each group.

Results

Means, adjusted means and standard deviations for each group on the post test appear in Table 3.

Insert Table 3 about here

Intercorrelations among the independent and dependent variables appear in Table 4.

Insert Table 4 about here

Regression effects for the post test overall scores and subtest scores appear in tables 5 and 6.

Insert Tables 5 and 6 about here

In terms of the first regression analysis, both the reading scores and the pretest explained a significant amount of variance. The standardized reading scores were entered first, explaining 14% of the variance $F(1,35)=5.83$. The pretest scores, entered in Step 2, explained another 14% of the variance $F(1,34)=6.75$. Since the interaction between Contrast 1 (the average of the two instructional groups versus the no instruction group) and the reading scores was significant, the main effects were not interpreted. In order to interpret the interaction, separate regression analyses were run for each group using the reading scores as the predictor variable for the dependent measure (post test). An average of the two regression lines for the instruction groups and the regression line for the no instruction group are graphed in figure 4. As can be seen, those students at

the lower end of the national stanine scale benefitted more from instruction, while for those at the top end, there was no difference among the groups. Contrast 2, comparing the two instructional groups revealed no significant differences.

Insert figure 4 about here.

Results of the second regression analysis (using the whole-text subtest as the dependent measure) show that, again, the reading score explained a significant amount of the variance (R^2=.22, $F(1,35)$=9.71.) No other results are significant.

Discussion

The first hypotheses was that the students in the two instruction groups would perform at a significantly higher level on the post test than the no instruction group. The results indicated that, in fact, explicit instruction is more beneficial for poorer readers but not for better readers. Similar interactions have been found in other comprehension studies in which both good and poor readers participated (e.g. Hanson and Pearson, 1983). Perhaps, as Brown, Campione and Day (1981) suggest, for lower children it might be necessary to make each step explicit. In this

study, at the higher end of the reading scale there was virtually no difference between the no instruction group and the two instruction groups, suggesting that better readers do not need such explicit instruction.

Interestingly, those students who recieved no instruction showed a trend toward greater variability as a group on the post test measures than did the two instructional groups (see Table 3). Patching et al (1983) found a similar result in their critical reading study and concluded: "the systematic instruction method was more effective with the the lower performing members in the group, thus decreasing the variability". They also found that when students use workbooks, there are qualitative differences in students' use of the available information. In other words, although it seems to make little difference for better students whether they receive explicit instruction, less capable students are subjected to a possible "hit or miss" situation using only independent practice materials. While better students are likely discover heuristics for performing a skill just by practicing it, poorer readers may or may not discover those heuristics.

The second hypothesis was that the students in the "functional" explicit instruction group would perform significantly higher on the whole-text subtest. By the time were operationalized the notion of functionality, it came down to two variables: giving a purpose and using only whole texts for practice. Therefore, we assumed this group would

outperform the other groups in applying this skill to whole texts. However, no differences were found among the three groups. In fact, putting this group immediately into whole texts rather than isolated sentences for practicing the skill appeared to make the task more difficult. Perhaps this group should have received both kinds of practice, on isolated sentences and whole texts.

One limitation of this study is that we did not have a measure for assessing the benefits of learning a skill in the context of having a purpose or real world application. Perhaps a task that required a more open-ended evaluation of a text for a particular purpose--such as evaluating a movie review and deciding whether to see it, or evaluating several advertisements to select the best product given the available evidence, might have revealed differences between the instructional groups. It was apparent, on Day 3, that this group was more interested in their task than the other two groups. They appeared to be more attentive and willing to engage in discussion and debate. Unfortunately, this affective component was not measured.

Another limitation is not unique to this study. In a review of 175 comprehension studies published between 1974 and 1984, Short (1984) argues that most of the dependent measures are not open-ended enough to measure the critical thinking that students engage in during the instructional procedure. While it is clear from the instructional excerpt discussed earlier (Figure 3) that students were engaged in

questioning and reasoning through the heuristics that were being presented, the level of reasoning that occurred while students took the post test is impossible to gauge given the multiple choice type format. For instance, during the instructional sequence students challenged a statement of fact that was overly general: It is faster to do your math with a calculator that in your head. They rightly reasoned that it would depend on the problem and the people involved. However, if this type of reasoning occurred during the post test, it would not be accurately measured. One conclusion that can be drawn from this is that if we want to truly measure the reasoning processes involved in reading comprehension and critical reading, we will have to develop more sensitive measures. In future studies it would be interesting to investigate students reasoning processes as they apply comprehension skills by using more "on-line" measures such as think-alouds, and clinical interview techniques.

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Table 1

Outline of Steps of Explicit Instruction

(From Pearson, P. D. and Leys, M. "Teaching Comprehension" in press.)

Step 1: Modelling Teacher models and explains. The teacher reviews what the students already know about the concept skill or strategy, explains or defines the skill and gives various and possibly contrasting examples. Using these examples, the teacher models his or her use of the skill or strategy.

Step 2: Guided Practice. The teachers and students together practice the skill.

Step 3: Review. The teacher reviews the concept skill or strategy being taught restating, eliciting or providing guidelines.

Step 4: Independent Practice. Worksheets are provided and children are asked to practice on their own and are given feedback.

Step 5: Application. Discuss why the skill, strategy or concept is a useful one and have children practice it in "naturally occurring" or "real" texts.

Table 2

Outline of Procedures for Each Group, Each Day

Group	Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four
Content of Instruction	A) discriminating statements of fact from statements of opinion B) discriminating between statements of fact that are "true" versus "false"	A) statements of opinion can be supported by statements of fact (use of evidence) B) statements of opinion cannot serve as evidence for other statements of opinion	--	--
Explicit Instruction	Steps 1&2: Modelling Guided Practice Step 3: Review Step 4: Independent Practice*	(feedback) Steps 1&2: Modeling & Guided Practice Step 3: Review Step 4: Independent Practice*	(feedback) Step 5: Application**	Post test
"Functional" Explicit Instruction	Steps 1&2: Modelling Guided Practice Step 3: Review Step 4: Independent Practice**	Steps 1&2: Modeling & Guided Practice Step 3: Review Step 4: Independent Practice**	(feedback) Step 5: Application***	Post test
No Instruction	Step 4: Independent Practice*	(corrections) Step 4: Independent Practice*	(corrections) Step 5: Application**	Post test

*Isolated Sentences
**Whole Texts
***"Writing" Task

Table 3

Raw Means, Adjusted Means and Standard Deviations

for the Overall Post Test Score

Group	Raw Mean	Adjusted Mean	Standard Deviation
Explicit Instruction n = 12	52.25	51.95	6.62
"Functional" Explicit Instruction n = 11	46.55	46.31	8.66
No Instruction n = 14	44.29	44.74	11.63

Raw Means, Adjusted Means and Standard

Deviations for the Whole-text Subtest Score

Group	Raw Mean	Adjusted Mean	Standard Deviation
Explicit Instruction n = 12	20.92	20.63	1.96
"Functional" Explicit Instruction n = 11	21.18	20.94	1.44
No Instruction n = 14	19.86	20.31	4.33

Table 4

Intercorrelations Among Variables

	1	2	3	4
1. Reading Score	-			
2. Pretest	.48	-		
3. Post test	.38	.51	-	
4. Whole-text Subtest	.47	.39	.75	-

Table 5

Regression Effects
with Overall Post Test Scores as the Dependent Measure

Step		R^2	R^2 Change
1	Reading Score	.143	.143*
2	Pretest Score	.284	.141*
3	C 1	.336	.052
	C 2	.395	.059
4	Reading x C 1	.484	.089*
	Reading x C 2	.487	.003
5	Pretest x C 1	.488	.000
	Pretest x C 2	.512	.024

*Significant at the .05 level

Table 6

Regression Effects with
Whole-text Subtest Scores as the Dependent Measure

Step		R^2	R^2 Change
1	Reading Score	.217	.217*
2	Pretest Score	.255	.038
3	C 1	.264	.009
	C 2	.265	.001
4	Reading x C 1	.298	.032
	Reading x C 2	.299	.001
5	Pretest x C 1	.302	.003
	Pretest x C 2	.308	.006

*Significant at the .05 level

Figure 1

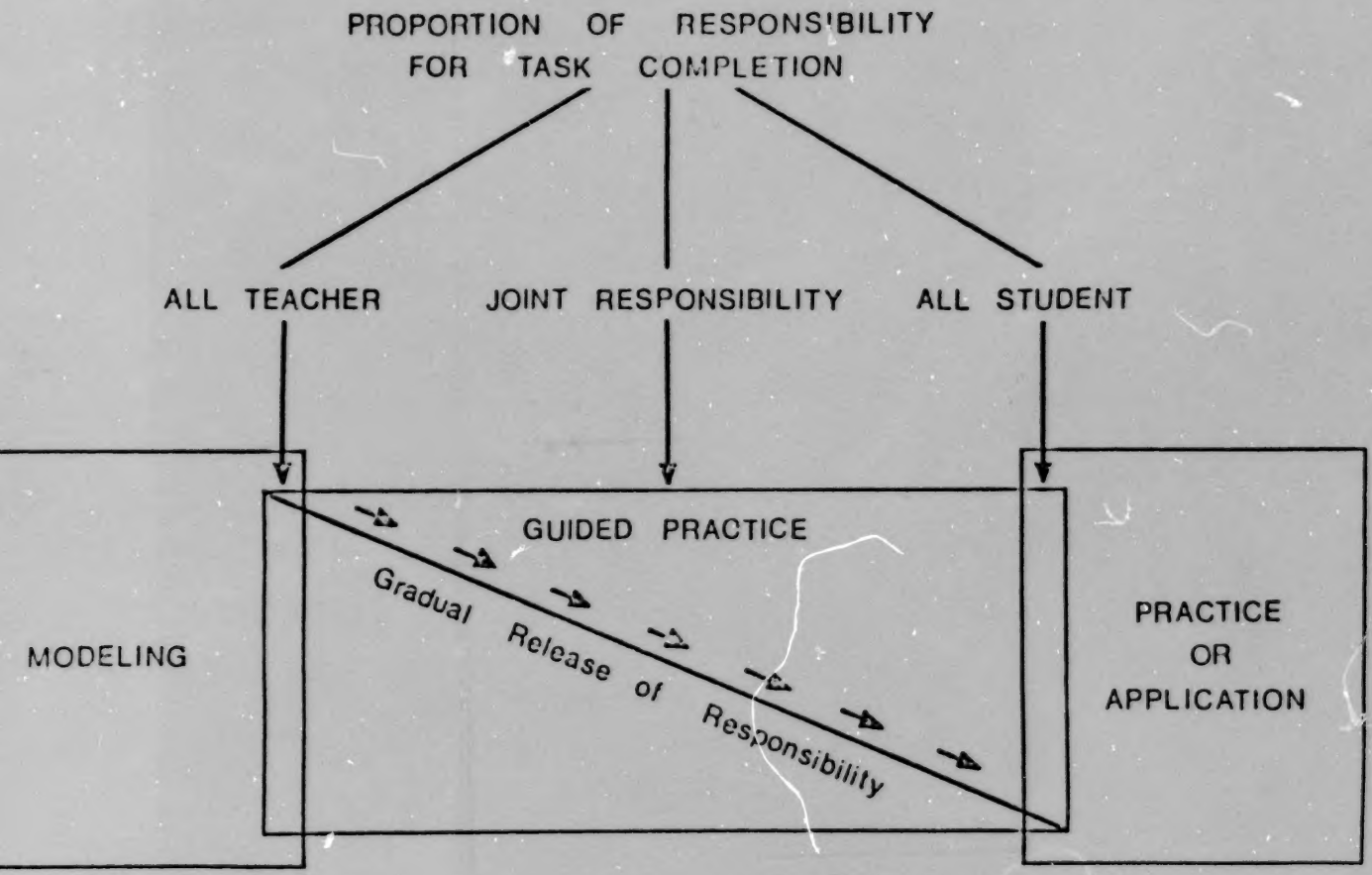
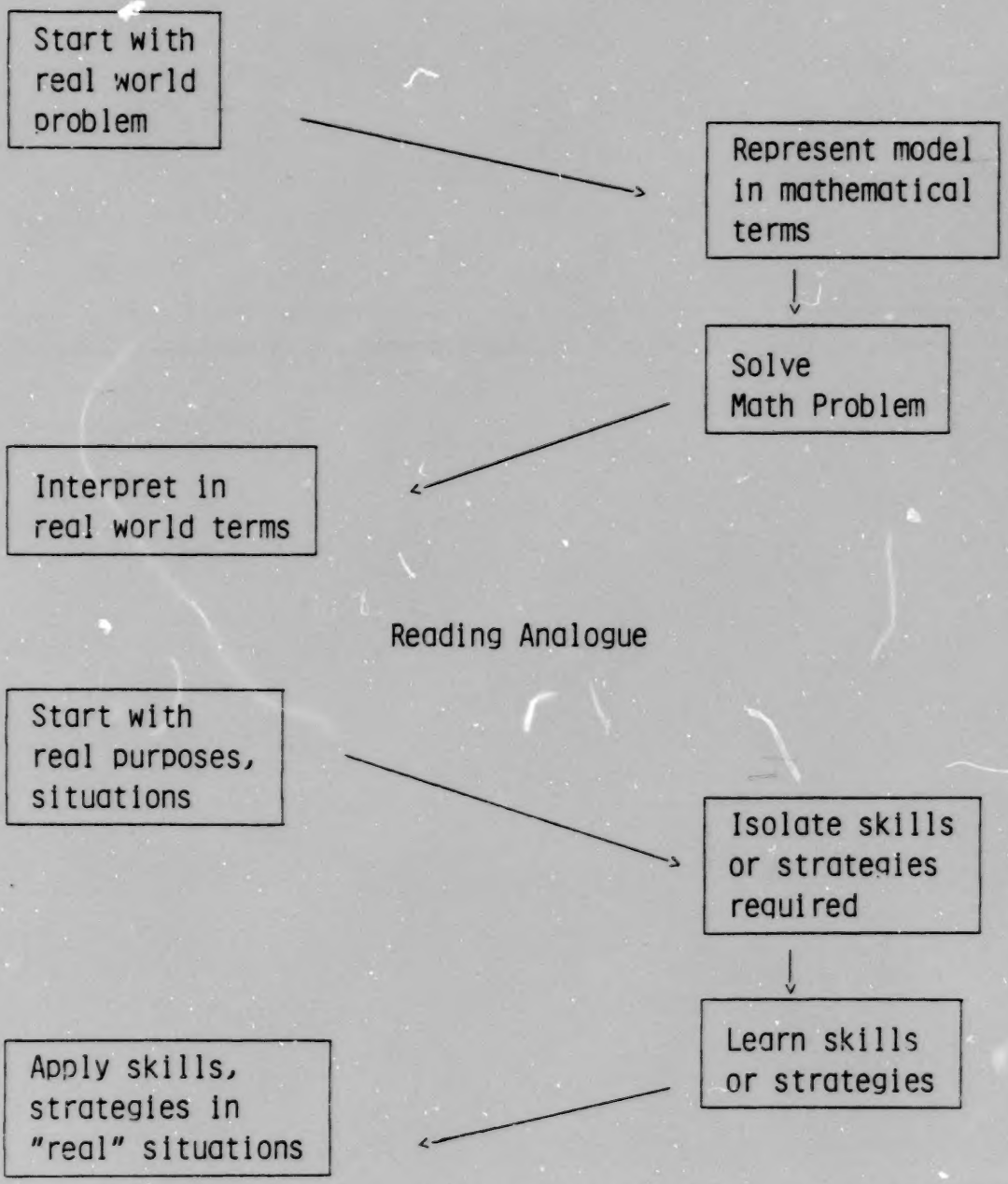


Figure I. The Gradual Release of Responsibility Model of Instruction (after Pearson and Gallagher, 1983)

Figure 2

Math Model*


Start with real world problem
Represent model in mathematical terms
Solve Math Problem
Interpret in real world terms
Reading Analogue
Start with real purposes, situations
Isolate skills or strategies required
Learn skills or strategies
Apply skills, strategies in "real" situations

* After Davis, B. and McKnight, C. Journal of Math Behavior, Vol. 3, No. 1

Figure 3

Transcript of the Modelling/Guided Practice Segment
of Day 1: Explicit Instruction

T: Remember when we were he re a few weeks ago and you worked on an exercise on statements of fact and statements of opinion. Tell me what you know or remember about statements of fact.

C: It's real
C: You can never change it.
C: It's true

T: Okay. They're real, you can never change them, they're true. (Teacher is repeating responses and writing them down). Does anybody have anything else to add about statements of fact? Okay, what about statements of opinion?

C: You can change them.

T: Okay, you can change them.

C: You can change opinions but you can't change facts.

T: Okay.

C: An opinion is what you think.

T: That's good. An opinion is what you think.

C: It's like you're agreeing with something.

T: You might agree...

C: ...but you might not.

T: You might not. You might disagree.

C: You can argue about it--an opinion--but you can't argue about a fact.

T: Oh, that's interesting. (Teacher is writing down responses). Okay, so if I say it's a really terrible day out today, would you argue with me?

C: I could tell you it's a nice day.

T: Okay, good. Gee, you all know a lot. I have four statements here I want to show you. (The children are called on to read the statements)

#1. K-mart sells more pairs of Levis than Jordache jeans.
#2. It is faster to do your homework with a calculator than to do it in your head.
#3. A meter stick is longer than a yard stick.
#4. Tommy's dog weighs thirty pounds.

T: Let's start with #4. Lily, do you think that might be a statement of fact or a statement of opinion?

C: A statement of fact.

T: A statement of fact. Okay, does everyone agree with Lily?

C: Yes.

C: It's a fact

C: Yes.

T: Why do you think it's a statement of fact?

C: Because you can't change it.

C: Yes you can, you can feed it more!

T: Oh, you can feed it more and it will gain weight but at any given point in time, we could find out how much Tommy's dog weighs. What about #3?

C: It's a fact.

T: Why do you say that?

C: Because a meter stick is longer than a yard stick.

T: You just know that?

C: Yea, and no one can argue with that.

T: This is interesting. What if I didn't know anything about meter sticks? How could I find out? Is there some way I could prove or test that or find out about that?

C: If you know where to get a meter stick and you had a yard stick, you could hold them up together and tell which is longer.

T: Okay, so I could measure or test or prove that. Once you proved it then no one could argue with you. What about #2? Is there anything I could do to tell if that is a statement of fact?

C: You could try both of them and see which one is faster.

C: Inaudible.

T: Okay, that's interesting. it might depend on the problem you are

working on. But there is a way we could test that.

C: Really it's an opinion because some people can use their heads better.

T: Okay, so if we had a race and we said: Between Chris and John, Chris is faster on the calculator, would it be a statement of fact then?

C: So it could be either a fact or an opinion...

T: Okay, let's do #1. Is there any way we could tell if this is a statement of fact or a statement of opinion. Lily?

C: ...Cause you can go to the store and ask them...It's hard to explain...

T: You're doing fine.

C: I think she's trying to say go to K-mart and ask them how many Levis jeans they have sold and how many Jordache jeans they have sold.

T: So there is a way to find out. We could go to the store and ask or look at their records and see how many of each kind they have sold. Okay, you guys are so good, let's try something else. Let's look at this next group of sentences.

#1 Jordache jeans are more "hip" than Levis.

C: It's an opinion.

T: Why?

C: Because for some people, they can be nicer, but not to other people.

T: Okay, so different people will think different things. Is there any way we can go and test whether they are "hipper"?

C: No.

T: It would be harder. What about #4: Tommy's dog is meaner than David's.

C: That's an opinion.

T: Okay, is that easy to test like the statement: Tommy's dog weighs thirty pounds?

C: No.

T: We don't have a scale that tells us if one dog is meaner than the other?

C: We can test it.

T: How?

C: Have a contest to see which dog is nicer.

T: Ah! What would our test be for niceness? Our test for niceness would not be as easy as our test for how much a dog weighs...What about #3?: A meter stick is better than a yard stick?

C: It might be an opinion.

T: Okay. Better is a little different from longer. It's not as easy to test. So we don't have an easy test.

C: Well...which one is longer?

T: The meter stick.

C: Okay, you could prove a meter stick is better than a yard stick. If you're trying to measure something and you don't have enough, then a meter stick is better.

T: That's interesting. So in a particular case or situation, if you want to measure something and you don't have enough then a meter stick would be better. Okay, the last one: It's more fun to do you math with a calculator than in your head.

C: That would be an opinion 'cause some people don't like using their head and some people like using a calculator.

T: Okay. Fun is a little harder to test than faster.

C: Yea.

T: Let's look at this. Let's review what we've just learned. John, can you read this?

C: Statements of fact can be proven to be true.

T: That's like a meter stick is longer than a yard stick or a dog weights thirty pounds. Chris, read the next one please.

C: Statements of opinion can not be proven so easily.

T: It's a bit harder to prove fun or meaner or better. Those are more difficult. Let's look at one example again. As Lily said, it is easy to go to a store to see if one kind of jean sells more than another. It's a little bit harder to tell about fun. Tom might think it's fun and Laura might think it's not at all. Faster--you can have a race. How good something is, well, that's a little bit harder to tell. Well let's see how you do on this next one. These are a bit trickier. Chris can you read this one?

C: The Metcalf school is in Champaign, Illinois.

T: What do you think about this one? Statement of fact?

C: That's wrong!

C: It's a fact that's wrong.

T: A fact that's wrong. How can we test that? How can we find out?

C: The Metcalf School is in Normal. It can't be in Champaign.

T: How can I find out? I know I'm in the Metcalf School and I know I'm in Normal right now, but say I was in New York and heard about the Metcalf School and wanted to know where it was. How could I find out? How could I check on my information?

C: Ask somebody.

T: I could just ask some lady in the grocery store?

C: No!

C: No!

C: Call someone.

T: Who can I call? Who might know?

C: Well maybe you could find someone who used to live in Illinois and ask them.

T: Say I met Mrs. Bradford (Their teacher). Could I ask her?

C: Yes!

C: Yes!

T: Would she be a good source?

C: Yes!

C: Or you could look in the yellow pages.

T: Of the New York City phonebook?

C: You could call information.

T: Okay, good. Jean-Pierre, could you read the next one?

C: The city of Chicago is in the state of Iowa.

T: Is that a statement of fact or a statement of opinion?

C: Statement of fact, but wrong.

T: Like the last one. That's easy to test. How could we check that?

C: Look on a map.

T: Look on a map, good. Laura, would you like to take #3?

C: In Illinois it snows in the summer.

T: Statement of fact or statement of opinion?

C: Fact, but wrong.

T: How could I check on that?

C: Look at the records.

T: I could look at the records. What else?

C: It's too hot. If you're smart enough you should know that.

T: Okay, common sense. Okay, last one: The fourth of July is in August.

C: It's a fact but it's wrong because the fourth of July is in July and because July is not in August.

T: Good. You're a very good group. Let's just review what we've learned. Tom, read the first one.

C: Statements of fact can be proven easily, but statements of opinion are difficult or impossible to prove.

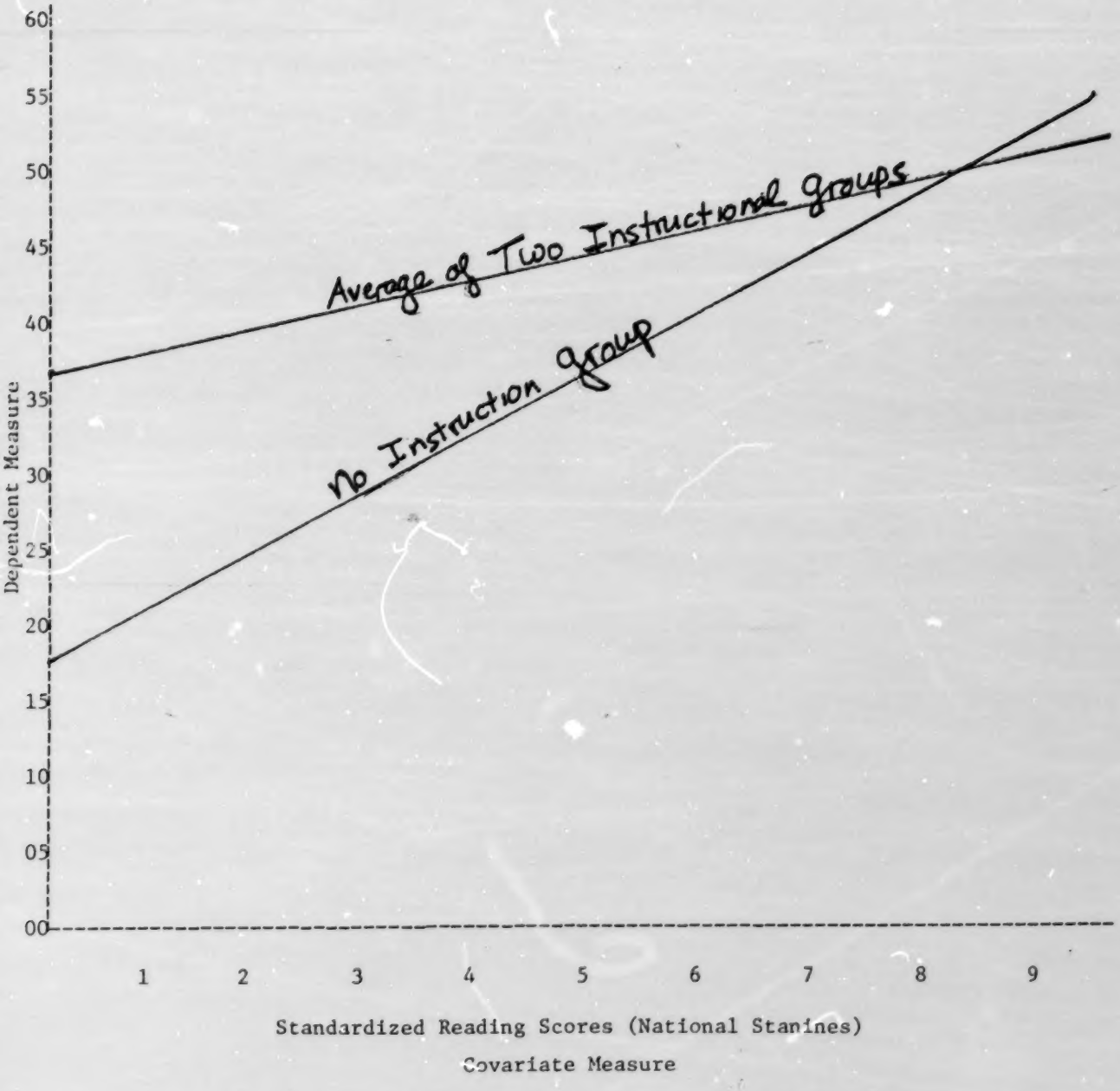
T: Chris, read the next one.

C: Statements of fact can be proven true or false.

T: Great. Well done.

Figure 4

Treatment by Covariate Interaction



Appendix A: Pretest

Name_____

Date of birth_____

Teacher_____

We are interested in what fourth graders know about facts, opinions, and evidence. You can help us by doing the following exercises. Please read the directions at the top of each page very carefully. Try to answer each question as well as you can. This is not a test. We will use your scores to help us plan a lesson for you.

Thank you very much!!

Read each sentence below. If the sentence states a fact, write an "F". If the sentence states an opinion, write an "O".

_____ 1. Watching TV is a waste of time.

_____ 2. The White Hen Pantry store sells more Coke than Pepsi.

_____ 3. In the past five years the winters have been colder in Chicago than in Normal.

_____ 4. "Return of the Jedi" was a boring movie.

_____ 5. Judy Blume writes more non-fiction stories than fiction stories.

_____ 6. A meter is longer than a yard.

_____ 7. Susan is prettier than Joanne.

_____ 8. It is faster to do multiplication on paper than on a computer.

_____ 9. String beans have more vitamins than lettuce.

_____10. Mikes's cat weighs twelve pounds.

_____11. The University of Illinois has a great basketball team.

_____12. Springfield is the capital of Illinois.

_____13. There is life on Mars.

_____14. German shepherds are mean dogs.

_____15. By the year 2000, cars will drive themselves.

_____16. Pepsi tastes better than orange juice.

_____17. At lunch today, Patty and Joe ate ten hot dogs each.

_____18. It's not fair that girls can't play on the little league team.

_____19. When I saw "Return of the Jedi", twenty people left the theater before the movie was over.

_____20. Michael Jackson is a "hot" dancer.

Read the following paragraph and underline the sentences that contain opinions and circle the sentences that contain facts.

Star Wars

"Star Wars" is the greatest movie ever made. In one year, the film made over 200 million dollars. No other film has ever made so much money at the box office. "Star Wars" is better than "The Wizard of Oz" and "E.T." Seven Academy Awards went to "Star Wars". "The Wizard of Oz" and "E.T." only received three each. Also, the special effects in "Star Wars" are more awesome than in any other movie ever made. There will never be another movie like "Star Wars".

For every opinion and general statement (which are underlined), circle the best pieces of evidence to support that statement. You may choose as many as you think fit (that could be none, one, or both).

The Tiger

As a general rule, economy cars are not much fun to ride in, but we think our new model, the Tiger, is an exception. 1) The Tiger has outstanding overal performance. 2) Its engine accelerates from 0 to 60 miles per hour in ten seconds.

The Tiger also has great mileage. 1) It gets 49 miles per gallon on the highway and 35 miles per gallon in the city. 2) You won't have to fill up the tank nearly as often.

The Tiger provides outstanding comfort. 1) The seats are soft and cushiony and there is plenty of room inside. 2) The Tiger has front wheel drive and four-wheel shock absorbers to soften the bumps.

The more you ride in a Tiger, the more you will like it!

Please try to answer these questions.

1. What is a fact?

2. What is an opinion?

3. What is the difference between a fact and an opinion?

4. What does it mean to say a statement can be used as evidence?

Appendix B: Explicit Instruction Materials

Materials/ Day One

Explicit Instruction

Aim: to extend notion of statements of fact from "something that is true or real or has happened" to statements that contain information that is verifiable or potentially verifiable (as opposed to opinions which are not) by such means as counting, observing, measuring, etc. Statements of fact can be true or false.

Steps One and Two: Modelling and Guided Practice: Review what the students know about statements of fact and statements of opinion.

Say: Remember when we were here a few weeks ago and you worked on an exercise on statements of opinion and statements of fact. Tell me what you remember about statements of facts:

Possible responses: " A fact is a true "

" A fact is a true thing that someone says "

" a real thing "

" what people know "

Write these responses on an overhead (or blackboard).

Say: Can you remember what you said about statements of opinions

Possible responses:

" what somebody thinks "

" a person's feeling about something"

" something one person thinks and maybe someone else doesn't think that"

" something that's true to one person, but not true to others"

" something that you make up your mind about"

" something that might not be true "

" something that could be true or false"

Say: good, we are going to talk more about opinions in a minute.

Say: Now, can you give me some examples of statements of fact?

Write examples on the overhead.

Okay, I am going to add some.

"K-Mart sells more pairs of Levis than Jordache jeans"

"It is faster to do your math with a calculator than to do it in your head"

"A meter stick is longer than a yard stick"

"Tommy's dog weighs thirty pounds"

Say: Let me tell you how I might decide if this is a statement of fact or of opinion. I see the words "sells more" and I know that I could check on this by going to the store and looking at their sales records.

Now, how can you tell whether the other statements are statements of fact?

Possible responses (Take each sentence at a time)

You can look, count, test, etc.

You can ask, You can read about it, etc

What are you doing when you look, count, ask, read that something is a fact? (Try to get to idea that you are proving that the statement is true, real, etc)

Say: Let's look at this next group of sentences and see whether they are statements of fact or opinion.

"Jordache jeans are more "hip" than Levi's"

"It is more fun to do your math with a calculator than in your head"

"A meter stick is better than a yard stick"

"Tommy's dog is meaner than David's"

Say: (Model first sentence) Can we check on the rest of these statements like we did with the first ones?

We can't test these directly. They are what one person thinks. Therefore they must be opinions.

State Rule: Statements of fact can be proven to be true. Statements of opinion cannot be proven so easily.

For example: Testable : faster, sells more, longer, weight, height, age, temperature, location.
Less easily tested: beauty, "funness", goodness, niceness, fairness.

Say: Now suppose I read "The Metcalf School is in Champaign" Is that a statement of fact I would ask myself. (What do you think?)

Possible responses: It's not a fact because it's not true.

How do you know it's wrong or it's not a statement of fact?
Possible responses:
It's in Normal
How do you know?
Possible responses:
Town map, Town line, sources.

Say: So, you can prove it is wrong. And since we decided before that statements of fact contain things that can be proven, then even if it is

proven wrong, it is still a statement of fact (Explain that a statement is not itself a fact but a statement about something that is factual)

Example of Statements of facts that are false:

The city of Chicago is in the state of Iowa.

It Illinois, it snows in the summer.

The fourth of July is in August.

Amendment to rule: A statement of fact can be proven true or false.

Step Three: Review Remember the things we learned about statements of fact and statements of opinion today:

1) Statements of fact can be proven easily (but statements of opinion are difficult or impossible to prove.)

2) Statements of fact can be proven true or false.

Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion

Read each sentence below. Decide which sentences are statements of true facts, which are statements of false facts, and which are statements of opinion. In the blank before each sentence write the letters TF if the sentence is a statement of a true fact, write the letters FF if the sentence is a statement of a false fact, and write the letter O if the sentence is a statement of an opinion. For each statement of fact, true or false, give a possible source that you could use to check on this information.

_____ A. The best way to see an ice hockey game is on TV.

Possible Source_____

_____ B. Miss Bradford and Mrs. Behrends are fourth grade teachers at Metcalf School.

Possible Source_____

_____ C. New York City is in the state of California.

Possible Source_____

_____ 1. Columbus discovered China in 1492.

Possible Source_____

_____ 2. Lake Michigan is a large freshwater lake in the United States.

Possible Source_____

_____ 3. The Grand Canyon is one of the wonders of the world.

Possible Source_____

_____ 4. The noise of exploding fireworks on the Fourth of July is frightening.

Possible Source_____

_____ 5. A baseball game usually has 9 innings.

Possible Source_____

_____ 6. Photographs show you the way things and people look.

Possible Source_____

_____ 7. The average male hippopotamus weighs about 5 tons.

Possible Source_____

_____ 8. McDonald's french fries are always better than Burger King's or Wendy's.

Possible Source_____

_____ 9. Any boy between the ages of seven and seventeen can be a Girl Scout.

Possible Source_____

_____ 10. Football games seem to last forever.

Possible Source_____

_____ 11. Cashew butter is made by grinding cashew nuts.

Possible Source_____

_____ 12. The "Empire Strikes Back" is an exciting movie.

Possible Source_____

_____ 13. You can type faster on a computer than on a typewriter.

Possible Source_____

_____ 14. Illinois State University had an exciting basketball team this year.

Possible Source_____

_____ 15. Small dogs are friendlier than big dogs.

Possible Source_____

_____ 16. The Mississippi River flows through Mexico.

Possible Source_____

_____ 17. Peanut butter and grape jelly sandwiches always taste better than peanut butter and banana sandwiches.

Possible Source_____

_____ 18. A bicycle has two wheels, a tricycle has three wheels and a unicycle has one wheel.

Possible Source_____

_____ 19. The country that forms the northern border of the United States is Canada.

Possible Source_____

_____ 20. Most humans have 10 fingers and 10 toes.

Possible Source_____

_____ 21. The sun rises in the east.

Possible Source_____

_____ 22. Last years's homecoming queen at ISU was prettier than this year's queen.

Possible Source_____

_____ 23. Football and soccer are similar games, but it is more fun to play soccer.

Possible Source_____

_____ 24. It is easier to write a story on a typewriter than by hand.

Possible Source_____

_____ 25. Hart, Jackson and Mondale all want to be the Republican candidate for President of the United States.

Possible Source_____

_____ 26. Illinois is a boring place to live.

Possible Source_____

_____ 27. Hawaii is a great place to go for your vacation.

Possible Source_____

_____ 28. Hot air rises.

Possible Source _____

Day Two — Explicit Instruction

Aim: To review exercises from the day before and give necessary feedback. To emphasize that statements of opinions express feeling, beliefs, etc that are difficult or impossible to test. Statements of opinion also take the form of generalities. Statements of opinion can be supported by factual statements. When factual statements support an opinion we call these statements evidence. When statements of opinion are "supported" by other statements of opinion, this does not count as evidence.

Steps One and Two: Modelling and Guided Practice

Today we are going to learn more important information about statements of fact and statements of opinion.

1. Review exercises from day before.

2. What did we say a statement of opinion is?

Possible responses:

" what somebody thinks "

" a person's feeling about something "

" something one person thinks and maybe someone else doesn't think "

And especially, something that is difficult to check, test, etc

What are some examples?

(Students give examples)

Okay, let's look at some other examples:

Bananas are a good snack food

Illinois State University has a good basketball team

People who visit zoos should never feed the animals

People who smoke die of lung cancer

Let's look at the first example. Suppose this is something I believe. What if I wanted to "support" that statement. Perhaps I want to convince you to believe it, too. What could I say to make you try to believe it?

Well, I could say:

Bananas contain vitamins A, B and C

Or I could say:

Bananas have natural sugar and starch that give you quick energy

Now, let's try the next one.

Illinois State has a great basketball team. What statements of fact could I use to support that statement of opinion?

Possible Responses:

They went to the second round of the NCAA Midwest Regional Basketball Tournament

Bob Donewald won a coaching award

Okay, good

Now suppose I take the third example.

People who visit the zoo should never feed the animals. This statement of opinion is a little different because it is more like a general rule than a belief. But we can support genral rules or "generalities" with specific statements of fact that are easier to check. For instance:

People who visit the zoo should never feed the animals might be supported

with a statement like:

Some animals get sick if they eat foods such as popcorn and potatoe chips. It is possible that we could go to the zoo and see if this sometimes happens.

Another statement to support this generality might be:

Certain animals might injure visitors who get too close to cages. Again we could go and check to see if this is sometimes true by going to the zoo and maybe asking a zookeeper.

Let's look at the second example:

People who exercise are healthier than people who don't.

What are some statements of fact that we could use to support this statement?

Possible answers:

Exercise keeps you thin and this means less work for your heart.

Exercise helps your digestion

State Rule: Statements of Opinion (based on feelings, beliefs, or generalities) can be supported by statements of fact.

Now let's go back to the first example:

Bananas are a good snack food

Suppose I then said: "Bananas taste good" Does that support the first statement?

No. Why Not?

Because the second statement is another statement of opinion.

Let's look at the next one.

Illinois State has a great Basketball team. What if I said. All the players

are awesome on the court"

Does this support the first statement? NO.

Next:

People who visit the zoo should never feed the animals.

Suppose I said: I don't like to see people feeding the animals.

Does this support the first statement?

No.

Last example:

"People who exercise are healthier than people who don't. I like to exercise.

Does the second statement support the first?

No.

State Rule: A statement of opinion usually does not serve as evidence to support another statement of opinion.

Step Three: Review

1) Statement of Opinion (based on beliefs, feelings, or generalities) can be supported by statements of fact

2) A Statement of opinion usually does not serve as evidence to support another statement of opinion.

Step Four: Independent Practice
(Sentences)

For each statement of opinion below, circle the statement or statements below it that best support it.

A. Tamara is honest and hardworking

a. At the end of each day that she has worked here she has left the correct amount of money in the cash drawer.

b. She is a very nice girl.

c. Today I watched Tamara work and she made sure every customer found what he was looking for.

1. Golden Wheat Bread is better for you than Wonder Bread.

a. Golden Wheat Bread has more vitamins and iron per slice.

b. Wonder bread has more preservatives than Golden Wheat.

c. Golden Bread tastes better.

2. All factories should be shut down.

a. I don't like the noise and smells they cause.

b. Factories contribute to air pollution in this country.

c. Some factory workers I know have been in serious accidents at work.

3. Air bags are the best way of preventing injury from car accidents.

a. Car companies have done studies to show that air bags provide more safety than seat belts.

b. Air bags are not as annoying as seat belts and they feel probably feel soft when they inflate.

c. Nobobdy wears seatbelts, anyway.

4. The school day should be shorter.

   a. By the end of the day, school is boring.

   b. This state alone could save one million dollars a year by shortening the school day by thiry minutes.

   c. Teachers need more time to prepare for each day.

5. Mr. Roberts is the best television weather forcaster in Central Illinois.

   a. Mr. Roberts really makes me laugh.

   b. This winter, Mr. Roberts correctly forecasted more snow storms than any other forecaster in the area.

   c. Mr. Roberts uses the most up to date radar equipment in the area.

6. You should wear your raincoat today.

   a. It is raining outside.

   b. I like your bright red raincoat.

   c. You should always wear a raincoat in April.

7. The new 1984 Ferrari is an awesome car.

   a. It has a computerized dashboard.

   b. There is no other car on the road that is as exciting.

   c. The Ferrari has an all leather interior.

8. Boys aren't as good at math as girls.

   a. In national achievement tests girls score higher than boys.

   b. Girls like math more than boys do.

   c. Math is boring.

9. Broccoli is better for you than ice cream.

   a. Broccoli is a wonderful vegetable.

   b. Ice cream has a lot of sugar.

   c. Broccoli has more vitamins per ounce than ice cream.

10. The United States has the best team in the Olympics.

   a. The U.S. Team is the most dedicated team.

   b. In the last five years, the United States has won more track and field events than any other team.

   c. We have the most colorful uniforms.

Under each of the statements of opinion written below the paragraph, write in any statement or statements of fact from the paragraph that could serve as supporting evidence. Some statements of fact may be used more than once to support statements of opinion. Some statements of opinion may not have any supporting evidence.

Introducing the American Eagle

Our new American Eagle is an extraordinary automobile. With one switch it changes from two-wheel to four-wheel drive. You will feel confident as you drive the Eagle in stormy weather. It has four-wheel traction to keep you on the road, yet in clear weather, you can switch back to two-wheel drive. And then you get great mileage. In two wheel drive the Eagle gets thirty miles per gallon on the highway and twenty-four miles per gallon in the city. The Eagle also has luxurious extras. It has leather seats, a stereo tape deck and power windows. The Eagle is built by Ford. No family should be without one.

1. Our new American Eagle is an extraordinary car

2. You will feel confident as you drive the Eagle in stormy weather.

3. And then you get great mileage

4. The Eagle has luxurious extras

5. No family should be without one

SEASON OVER FOR ILLINOIS STATE REDBIRDS

The Illinois State Redbirds played great basketball this past season. Lou Stefanovic, Rickie Johnson and their teammates made it all the way to the second round of the NCAA Midwest Regional Basketball Tournament. In the First Round they played excellent basketball. It was a close game against Alabama all the way to the end. Even so, Illinois State won a narrow victory. Then the Redbirds went on to play the DePaul Demons. Because the Demons were a better team, there was no competition. The final score was 75-61. "From my standpoint, it wasn't a very exciting game," said Redbird Coach Bob Donewald. But ISU still had a superior season, and Donewald is an outstanding coach. In fact, he went on to win the Missouri Valley Coach of The Year Award.

1. The Illinois Redbirds played great basketball this past season.

2. In the first round they played excellent basketball.

3. Because the Demons are a better team, there was no competition.

4. But ISU still had an superior season, and Donewald is an outstanding coach.

Appendix C: "Functional" Explicit Instruction Materials

Materials/ Day One "Functional" Explicit Instruction Materials

Aim: to extend notion of statements of fact from "something that is true or real or has happened" to statements that contain information that is verifiable or potentially verifiable (as opposed to opinions which are not) by such means as counting, observing, measuring, etc. Statements of fact can be true or false.

In the next two days, we are going to learn about statements of facts and opinions, and about how statements of fact can be used to support statements of opinion. It is important in everyday life to be able to tell the difference between statements of facts and statements of opinion when making decisions. Also we need to know when a statement of opinion is supported by facts. For instance, say you wanted to buy a home computer so you can play video games. You can either buy an Atari or an Adam. When you read the ads for each computer, you want to be able to tell which one is better based on statements of fact, not just opinions. This is also true when you are trying to decide who should be president of the United States. In a few days we will write an article for the school newspaper to help students make this decision. When we write this article we will need to support our statements of opinion with statements of fact.

Steps One and Two: Modelling and Guided Practice

Review what the students know about statements of fact and statements of opinion.

Say: Remember when we were here a few weeks ago and you worked on an exercise on statements of opinion and statements of fact. Tell me what you remember about statements of facts:

Possible responses: " A fact is a true "

" A fact is a true thing that someone says "

" a real thing "

" what people know "

Write these responses on an overhead (or blackboard).

Say: Can you remember what you said about statements of opinions

Possible responses:

" what somebody thinks "

" a person's feeling about something"

" something one person thinks and maybe someone else doesn't think that"

" something that's true to one person, but not true to others"

" something that you make up your mind about"

" something that might not be true "

" something that could be true or false"

Say: good, we are going to talk more about opinions in a minute.

Say: Now, can you give me some examples of statements of fact?

Write examples on the overhead.

Okay, I am going to add some.

"K-Mart sells more pairs of Levis than Jordache jeans"

"It is faster to do your math with a calculator than to do it in your head"

"A meter stick is longer than a yard stick"

"Tommy's dog weighs thirty pounds"

Say: Let me tell you how I might decide if this is a statement of fact or of opinion. I see the words "sells more" and I know that I could check on this by going to the store and looking at their sales records.

Now, how can you tell whether the other statements are statements of fact?

Possible responses (Take each sentence at a time)

You can look, count, test, etc.

You can ask, You can read about it, etc

What are you doing when you look, count, ask, read that something is a fact? (Try to get to idea that you are proving that the statement is true, real, etc)

Say: Let's look at this next group of sentences and see whether they are statements of fact or opinion.

"Jordache jeans are more "hip" than Levi's"

"It is more fun to do your math with a calculator than in your head"

"A meter stick is better than a yard stick"

"Tommy's dog is meaner than David's"

Say: (Model first sentence) Can we check on the rest of these statements like we did with the first ones?

We can't test these directly. They are what one person thinks. Therefore they must be opinions.

State Rule: Statements of fact can be proven to be true. Statements of opinion cannot be proven so easily.

For example: Testable : faster, sells more, longer, weight, height, age, temperature, location.

Less easily tested: beauty, "funness", goodness, niceness, fairness.

Say: Now suppose I read "The Metcalf School is in Champaign" Is that a statement of fact I would ask myself. (What do you think?)

Possible responses: It's not a fact because it's not true.

How do you know it's wrong or it's not a statement of fact?

Possible responses:

It's in Normal

How do you know?

Possible responses:

Town map, Town line, sources.

Say: So, you can prove it is wrong. And since we decided before that statements of fact contain things that can be proven, then even if it is proven wrong, it is still a statement of fact (Explain that a statement is not itself a fact but a statement about something that is factual)

Example of Statements of facts that are false:

The city of Chicago is in the state of Iowa.

It Illinois, it snows in the summer.

The fourth of July is in August.

Amendment to rule: A statement of fact can be proven true or false.

Step Three: Review

Remember the things we learned about statements of fact and statements of opinion today:

1) Statements of fact can be proven easily (but statements of opinion are difficult or impossible to prove). Statements of fact can be proven true or false.

To help us get ready to write our article for the school newspaper, we will practice what we have learned.

Step Four: Independent Practice
(Whole Texts)

Read each paragraph below. Decide which sentences are statements of true facts, which are statements of false facts, and which are statements of opinion. Next to the number of the sentence below, write the letters TF if the sentence is a statement of a true fact, write the letters FF if the sentence is a statement of a false fact, and write the letter O if the sentence is a statement of opinion. For each statement of fact, true or false, give a possible source that you could use to check on this information.

------ The Middletown News ------

VOTERS DECIDE ON BUILDING NEW PLAYGROUND FOR SCHOOL

1) Members of the town voted last night on whether or not to build a playground at the new elementary school. 2) At an earlier meeting, many people said that schools should have playgrounds. 3) "It's only fair that students have a place to play during their free time." 4) The old elementary school had the best playground in town. 5) It had a large play area with a slide, jungle gym, and several swings. 6) It would be a terrible if the children had no place at the new school to run and play during recess. 7) The votes were turned in by community members of all ages. 8) We will know the results after the vote tomorrow.

1. _____

Possible Source _____

2. _____

Possible Source _____

3. _____

Possible Source _____

4. _____

Possible Source _____

5. _____

Possible Source _____

6. _____

Possible Source _____

7. _____

Possible Source _____

8. _____

Possible Source _____

Introducing the American Eagle

1) Our new American Eagle is an extraordinary automobile. 2) With one switch it changes from two-wheel to a four-wheel drive. 3) You feel confident as you drive the Eagle in stormy weather. 4) It has four-wheel traction to keep you on the road, yet in clear weather, you can switch back to two-wheel drive. 5) And then you get great mileage. 6) In two wheel drive the Eagle gets thirty miles per gallon on the highway and twenty-four miles per gallon in the city. 7) The Eagle also has luxurious extras. 8) It has leather seats, a stereo tape deck and power windows. 9) The Ford Eagle is built by Datsun. 10) No family should be without one.

1._____

Possible Source _____

3._____

Possible Source _____

4._____

Possible Source _____

5._____

Possible Source _____

6._____

Possible Source _____

7._____

Possible Source_____

8._____

Possible Source _____

9._____

Possible Source _____

10._____

Possible Source _____

SEASON OVER FOR THE ILLINOIS STATE REDBIRDS

1) The Illinois State Redbirds played great basketball this past season. 2) Lou Stefanovic, Rickie Johnson and their teammates made it all the way to the second round of the NCAA Midwest Regional Basketball Tournament. 3) In the First Round they played excellent basketball. 4) It was a close game against Alabama all the way to the end. 5) Even so, Alabama won a narrow victory. 6) Then the Redbirds went on to play the DePaul Demons. 7) Because the Demons are a better team, there was no competition. 8) The final score was 75-61. 9) "From my standpoint, it wasn't a very exciting game" said Redbird Coach Bob Donewald. 10) But ISU still had a superior season, and Donewald is an outstanding coach. 11) In fact, he went on to win the Mississipi Valley Coach of The Year Award.

1. _____

Possible Source _____

2. _____

Possible Source _____

3. _____

Possible Source _____

4. _____

Possible Source _____

5. _____

Possible Source _____

6. _____

Possible Source _____

7. _____

Possible Source _____

8. _____

Possible Source _____

9. _____

Possible Source _____

10. _____

Possible Source _____

11 _____

Possible Source _____

Day Two "Functional" Explicit Instruction Materials

Aim: To review exercises from the day before and give necessary feedback. To emphasize that statements of opinions express feeling, beliefs, etc that are difficult or impossible to test. Statements of opinion also take the form of generalities. Statements of opinion can be supported by factual statements. When factual statements support an opinion we call these statements evidence. When statements of opinion are "supported" by other statements of opinion, this does not count as evidence.

Steps One and Two: Modelling and Guided Practice

Today we are going to learn more important information about statements of fact and statements of opinion which will help us write our article for the school newspaper.

1. Review exercises from day before.

2. What did we say a statement of opinion is?

Possible responses:

" what somebody thinks "

" a person's feeling about something "

" something one person thinks and maybe someone else doesn't think "

And especially, something that is difficult to check, test, etc

What are some examples?

(Students give examples)

Okay, let's look at some other examples:

Bananas are a good snack food

Illinois State University has a good basketball team

People who visit zoos should never feed the animals

People who smoke die of lung cancer

Let's look at the first example. Suppose this is something I believe. What if I wanted to "support" that statement. Perhaps I want to convince you to believe it, too. What could I say to make you try to believe it?

Well, I could say:

Bananas contain vitamins A, B and C

Or I could say:

Bananas have natural sugar and starch that give you quick energy

Now, let's try the next one.

Illinois State has a great basketball team. What statements of fact could I use to support that statement of opinion?

Possible Responses:

They went to the second round of the NCAA Midwest Regional Basketball Tournament

Bob Donewald won a coaching award

Okay, good

Now suppose I take the third example.

People who visit the zoo should never feed the animals. This statement of opinion is a little different because it is more like a general rule than a belief. But we can support genral rules or "generalities" with specific statements of fact that are easier to check. For instance:

People who visit the zoo should never feed the animals might be supported with a statement like:

Some animals get sick if they eat foods such as popcorn and potatoe chips. It is possible that we could go to the zoo and see if this sometimes happens.

Another statement to support this generality might be:

Certain animals might injure visitors who get too close to cages.

Again we could go and check to see if this is sometimes true by going to the zoo and maybe asking a zookeeper.

Let's look at the second example:

People who exercise are healthier than people who don't.

What are some statements of fact that we could use to support this statement?

Possible answers:

Exercise keeps you thin and this means less work for your heart.

Exercise helps your digestion

State Rule: Statements of Opinion (based on feelings, beliefs, or generalities) can be supported by statements of fact.

Now let's go back to the first example:

Bananas are a good snack food

Suppose I then said: "Bananas taste good" Does that support the first statement?

No. Why Not?

Because the second statement is another statement of opinion.

Let's look at the next one.

Illinois State has a great Basketball team. What if I said. All the players are awesome on the court"

Does this support the first statement? NO.

Next:

People who visit the zoo should never feed the animals.

Suppose I said: I don't like to see people feeding the animals.

Does this support the first statement?

No.

Last example:

"People who exercise are healthier than people who don't. I like to exercise.

Does the second statement support the first?

No.

State Rule: A statement of opinion usually does not serve as evidence to support another statement of opinion.

Step Three: Review

1) Statement of Opinion (based on beliefs, feelings, or generalities) can be supported by statements of fact

2) A Statement of opinion usually does not serve as evidence to support another statement of opinion.

We need to remember these rules when we write our article.

Step Four: Independent Practice
(Whole Texts)

Under each of the statements of opinion written below the paragraph, write in any statement or statements of fact from the paragraph that could serve as supporting evidence. Some statements of fact may be used more than once to support statements of opinion. Some statements of opinion may not have any supporting evidence.

Introducing the American Eagle

Our new American Eagle is an extraordinary automobile. With one switch it changes from two-wheel to four-wheel drive. You will feel confident as you drive the Eagle in stormy weather. It has four-wheel traction to keep you on the road, yet in clear weather, you can switch back to two-wheel drive. And then you get great mileage. In two wheel drive the Eagle gets thirty miles per gallon on the highway and twenty-four miles per gallon in the city. The Eagle also has luxurious extras. It has leather seats, a stereo tape deck and power windows. The Eagle is built by Ford. No family should be without one.

1. Our new American Eagle is an extraordinary car

2. You will feel confident as you drive the Eagle in stormy weather.

3. And then you get great mileage

4. The Eagle has luxurious extras

5. No family should be without one

SEASON OVER FOR ILLINOIS STATE REDBIRDS

The Illinois State Redbirds played great basketball this past season. Lou Stefanovic, Rickie Johnson and their teammates made it all the way to the second round of the NCAA Midwest Regional Basketball Tournament. In the First Round they played excellent basketball. It was a close game against Alabama all the way to the end. Even so, Illinois State won a narrow victory. Then the Redbirds went on to play the DePaul Demons. Because the Demons were a better team, there was no competition. The final score was 75-61. "From my standpoint, it wasn't a very exciting game," said Redbird Coach Bob Donewald. But ISU still had a superior season, and Donewald is an outstanding coach. In fact, he went on to win the Missouri Valley Coach of The Year Award.

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Step Five

Application Task: Article

WHO WOULD YOU VOTE FOR?

Gary Hart, Walter Mondale, Jesse Jackson and Ronald Reagan are all running for president in 1984. What do we know about these men?

Ronald Reagan is a good and popular leader.

Jesse Jackson is a peacemaker.

Many people feel Walter Mondale has the best experience of the three Democratic Candidates.

Gary Hart has good, new ideas.

Choosing a president is a tough decision!

INFORMATION SHEET

1) The latest Gallup Polls show Reagan's policies are supported by the majority of Americans.

2) Ronald Reagan has not met with a Russian Leader in three years.

3) Mondale says he would keep soldiers in Central America, but he would reduce the number.

4) Jackson says he wants to pursue peace, not war.

5) Gary Hart went to Yale Law School

6) Jackson brought a Lieutenant who was prisoner back from Syria.

7) Gary Hart says he will stop building more nuclear arms.

8) Reagan takes from the poor and gives to the rich.

9) Gary Hart is handsome.

10) Because of his experience, Mondale has won most of the primary votes and now has 900 delegates--400 more than Hart and 750 more than Jackson.

11) Jackson is a minister.

12) Reagan spends a lot of the taxpayer's money on weapons.

13) Jackson has no previous experience in government or any public office.

14) Mondale has been vice-president

15) Mondale is endorsed by Labor Unions.

16) The economy has improved in the last four years; since Reagan took office the stock market has risen over 200 points.

17) Gary Hart has proposals to support the growth of small businesses across the country.

Appendix D: No Instruction Materials

Step Four
Independent Practice

Distinguishing Between Fact and Opinion

Read each sentence below. Decide which sentences are statements of true facts, which are statements of false facts, and which are statements of opinion. In the blank before each sentence write the letters TF if the sentence is a statement of a true fact, write the letters FF if the sentence is a statement of a false fact, and write the letter O if the sentence is a statement of an opinion. For each statement of fact, true or false, give a possible source that you could use to check on this information.

_____ A. The best way to see an ice hockey game is on TV.

Possible Source_____

_____ B. Miss Bradford and Mrs. Behrends are fourth grade teachers at Metcalf School.

Possible Source_____

_____ C. New York City is in the state of California.

Possible Source_____

_____ 1. Columbus discovered China in 1492.

Possible Source_____

_____ 2. Lake Michigan is a large freshwater lake in the United States.

Possible Source_____

_____ 3. The Grand Canyon is one of the wonders of the world.

Possible Source_____

_____ 4. The noise of exploding fireworks on the Fourth of July is frightening.

Possible Source_____

_____ 5. A baseball game usually has 9 innings.

Possible Source_____

_____ 6. Photographs show you the way things and people look.

Possible Source_____

_____ 7. The average male hippopotamus weighs about 5 tons.

Possible Source_____

_____ 8. McDonald's french fries are always better than Burger King's or Wendy's.

Possible Source_____

_____ 9. Any boy between the ages of seven and seventeen can be a Girl Scout.

Possible Source_____

_____ 10. Football games seem to last forever.

Possible Source_____

_____ 11. Cashew butter is made by grinding cashew nuts.

Possible Source_____

_____ 12. The "Empire Strikes Back" is an exciting movie.

Possible Source_____

_____ 13. You can type faster on a computer than on a typewriter.

Possible Source_____

_____ 14. Illinois State University had an exciting basketball team this year.

Possible Source_____

_____ 15. Small dogs are friendlier than big dogs.

Possible Source_____

_____ 16. The Mississippi River flows through Mexico.

Possible Source_____

_____ 17. Peanut butter and grape jelly sandwiches always taste better than peanut butter and banana sandwiches.

Possible Source_____

_____ 18. A bicycle has two wheels, a tricycle has three wheels and a unicycle has one wheel.

Possible Source_____

_____ 19. The country that forms the northern border of the United States is Canada.

Possible Source_____

_____ 20. Most humans have 10 fingers and 10 toes.

Possible Source_____

_____ 21. The sun rises in the east.

Possible Source_____

_____ 22. Last years's homecoming queen at ISU was prettier than this year's queen.

Possible Source_____

_____ 23. Football and soccer are similar games, but it is more fun to play soccer.

Possible Source_____

_____ 24. It is easier to write a story on a typewriter than by hand.

Possible Source_____

_____ 25. Hart, Jackson and Mondale all want to be the Republican candidate for President of the United States.

Possible Source_____

_____ 26. Illinois is a boring place to live.

Possible Source_____

_____ 27. Hawaii is a great place to go for your vacation.

Possible Source_____

_____ 28. Hot air rises.

Possible Source_____

Step Four
Independent Practice

For each statement of opinion below, circle the statement or statements below it that best support it.

A. Tamara is honest and hardworking

a. At the end of each day that she has worked here she has left the correct amount of money in the cash drawer.

b. She is a very nice girl.

c. Today I watched Tamara work and she made sure every customer found what he was looking for.

1. Golden Wheat Bread is better for you than Wonder Bread.

a. Golden Wheat Bread has more vitamins and iron per slice.

b. Wonder bread has more preservatives than Golden Wheat.

c. Golden Bread tastes better.

2. All factories should be shut down.

a. I don't like the noise and smells they cause.

b. Factories contribute to air pollution in this country.

c. Some factory workers I know have been in serious accidents at work.

3. Air bags are the best way of preventing injury from car accidents.

a. Car companies have done studies to show that air bags provide more safety than seat belts.

b. Air bags are not as annoying as seat belts and they feel probably feel soft when they inflate.

c. Nobobdy wears seatbelts, anyway.

4. The school day should be shorter.

   a. By the end of the day, school is boring.

   b. This state alone could save one million dollars a year by shortening the school day by thiry minutes.

   c. Teachers need more time to prepare for each day.

5. Mr. Roberts is the best television weather forcaster in Central Illinois.

   a. Mr. Roberts really makes me laugh

   b. This winter, Mr. Roberts correctly forecasted more snow storms than any other forecaster in the area.

   c. Mr. Roberts uses the most up to date radar equipment in the area.

6. You should wear your raincoat today.

   a. It is raining outside.

   b. I like your bright red raincoat.

   c. You should always wear a raincoat in April.

7. The new 1984 Ferrari is an awesome car.

   a. It has a computerized dashboard.

   b. There is no other car on the road that is as exciting.

   c. The Ferrari has an all leather interior.

8. Boys aren't as good at math as girls.

   a. In national achievement tests girls score higher than boys.

   b. Girls like math more than boys do.

   c. Math is boring.

9. Broccoli is better for you than ice cream.

   a. Broccoli is a wonderful vegetable.

   b. Ice cream has a lot of sugar.

   c. Broccoli has more vitamins per ounce than ice cream.

10. The United States has the best team in the Olympics.

   a. The U.S. Team is the most dedicated team.

   b. In the last five years, the United States has won more track and field events than any other team.

   b. We have the most colorful uniforms.

Step Five
Application

Under each of the statements of opinion written below the paragraph, write in any statement or statements of fact from the paragraph that could serve as supporting evidence. Some statements of fact may be used more than once to support statements of opinion. Some statements of opinion may not have any supporting evidence.

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2. In the first round they played excellent basketball.

3. Because the Demons are a better team, there was no competition.

4. But ISU still had an superior season, and Donewald is an outstanding coach.

Appendix E: Post test

POST TEST

DIRECTIONS

Read each sentence below. Decide which sentences are statements of facts and which are statements of opinion. In the blank before each sentence write the letter T if the sentence is a statement of fact and write the letter O if the statement is a statement of opinion. For each statement of fact, give a possible source that you could use to check the information. Remember: for a statement of opinion you do not need to put a source.

_____ 1. Watching cartoons is a waste of time.

Possible Source _____

_____ 2. A basketball game has four quarters.

Possible Source _____

_____ 3. Jesse Jackson is the best candidate for president.

Possible Source _____

_____ 4. Tornadoes are frightening.

Possible Source _____

_____ 5. Your dinner will cook faster in a microwave oven than in a regular oven.

Possible Source _____

_____ 6. Concrete is made by mixing together water, cement and gravel.

Possible Source _____

_____7. Peoria is the capitol of Illinois.

Possible Source _____

_____ 8. The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe by C.S. Lewis is an exciting book.

Possible Source _____

_____9. Florida is the smallest state in the U.S.

Possible Source _____

_____10. Ice skating is more fun than roller skating.

Possible Source _____

_____11. The cheetah can run faster than any other animal.

Possible Source _____

_____12. Colorado is the best place to go skiing.

Possible Source _____

_____13. Blue is the prettiest color.

Possible Source _____

_____14. Carrots take longer to grow than green beans.

Possible Source _____

_____15. The sun sets in the West.

Possible Source _____

DIRECTIONS

For each statement of opinion below, underline the statement or statements below that best support it.

1. Roos sneakers are better sneakers than Nikes.

   a. Tests from a consumer magazine show that Roos last longer.

   b. Roos come in prettier colors.

   c. Roos have a zipper pocket.

2. Joseph is lazy.

   a. He doesn't get up until ten o'clock in the morning.

   b. Joseph wears messy clothes.

   c. Joseph drops his clothes on the floor instead of hanging them in the closet.

4. In Illinois, the weather in the month of April is terrible.

   a. The flowers start to bloom by the end of April.

   b. April is a bad month to be born in.

   c. The average rainfall in April is two inches a week.

5. Dogs are better pets than cats.

   a. Dogs are more faithful than cats.

   b. Dogs can be trained.

   c. Cats are not as friendly as dogs.

6. Boy George of Culture Club is weird.

   a. He dresses in women's clothing.

   b. He has a great voice.

   c. He wears lots of makeup and jewelry.

7. K-mart is a great store.

   a. It's fun to look at all the stuff to buy.

   b. Prices are lower at K-mart than at Kohls.

   c. The salespeople at K-mart are not very helpful.

DIRECTIONS

Read each paragraph below. Decide which sentences are statements of fact and which are statements of opinion. Next to the numbers at the right, put an O if the sentence is a statement of opinion and an F if the sentences is a statement of fact.

THE RETURN OF THE JEDI

1) "The Return of the Jedi" was a fantastic movie. 2) It was the third in a series by George Lucas. 3) It was also the best. 4) There was a horrible green monster named "Jabba" that seemed so real. 5) At one point Jabba held Leia as a prisoner. 6) Then Luke Skywalker came to save her. 7) Luke Skywalker is truly a hero. 8) The best part was the motorcycle chase through the woods. 9) That time, the ewocks helped save Princess Leia. 10) The ewocks were so cute and cuddly, they were like teddy bears. 11) George Lukas won an award for best director for "Return of the Jedi". 12) He certainly deserved it!

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

5._____

6._____

7._____

8._____

9._____

10._____

11._____

12._____

A FIRST FOR BALLOON FLIGHT

1) On May 12, 1980, a huge helium-filled balloon landed in eastern Cananda. 2) It was an incredible flight. 3) The 75-foot-tall balloon had safely ended the first non-stop balloon flight across the North American Continent. 4) The pilots of the balloon were Maxie and Chris Anderson. 5) For four days they flew through snow and freezing temperatures travelling more than 300 miles. 6) Both balloonists were airsick for part of the time. 7) Even so, their adventure was exciting. 8) People should admire these balloonists for their courage.

1._____
2._____
3._____
4._____
5._____
6._____
7._____
8._____

DIRECTIONS

Read the paragraph below. Then, for each statement of opinion which is underlined below, choose the best statement or statements of evidence to support it. Circle the letter in front of the best choices.

THE IBM PC junior

The new IBM personal computer is a powerful tool for modern times.

a) The IBM is sold with lots of good ideas to make using the computer easier. b) There are programs for children to do their homework with, and for adults to keep track of household expenses. c) Every home should have a computer.

The new IBM computer is fun and simple to use. a) The "freeboard" (a keyboard that does not need to be connected) is easy to get comfortable with. b) There are picture instructions to help you get started. c) The new IBM computer looks a lot like other computers.

People can easily afford the price of the new IBM computer. a). The price ranges from 500 to 800 dollars. b) Prices may be different in different stores. c) The New IBM computer is a great buy.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE!!!!

The new IBM personal computer is bright little addition to the family that can "grow up" fast. a) Everyone will enjoy the games you can play on it. b) Many extra programs and printers for the computer are available at any IBM computer store. c) The IBM is the best personal computer you can buy.

THANK YOU!!!!!